

## Internal – Deliberative

# Recent R10 Agriculture Collaborations and Support

Nationally, EPA is committed to a strong partnership with the agriculture community to assist in fulfilling our mission of protecting human health and the environment. We are engaged in a number of partnership activities, including place-based initiatives where we work with the agricultural community to restore the quality of water, land or air resources.

Here in Region 10 we are committed to providing financial and technical assistance to agricultural partners to achieve these goals. Below is a small subset of examples of recent such assistance in Region 10.

### Technical Assistance and R&D for Agriculture in Puget Sound

- BMP technical assistance in Puget Sound (Current). EPA has awarded over \$6 million to state and local health jurisdictions in Puget Sound to implement Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC) programs – a key strategy to protect water quality for shellfish. A significant portion of these funds were solely for agricultural sector Best Management Practices technical assistance and cost-share support.
- Clean Samish Initiative Launch. In 2009, the “Clean Samish Initiative” (CSI) – a partnership including Skagit County, the State Departments of Ecology and Health, the Skagit Conservation District, the Skagit Conservation Education Alliance, the Samish Tribe, the Western Washington Agricultural Association, the Washington State Dairy Federation, EPA, and Taylor Shellfish – was launched, leveraging EPA funding, to implement pollution reductions in the Samish Basin. Approximately \$7 million has been invested in activities such as on-site sewage system inspection, technical assistance, voluntary compliance efforts, installing stream exclusion fencing for livestock on many farms, concerted community education and outreach, and enforcement when needed.
- 2010-15 Cooperative Agreement between EPA and Whatcom Conservation District. This research developed a year-round system for assessing and mitigating the runoff and leaching risk associated with manure application based on timing and location. As of 2014, 35% of dairies in Whatcom County had a full “application risk management” (ARM) plan, covering ~12,200 acres, with a 10% use in Skagit, Snohomish, and King Counties. [NEED TO CONFIRM THESE

STATS WITH WHATCOM CD] <http://www.wadairyplan.org/ARM>.

## Other Puget Sound Program Support for Agriculture

- \$6M in 2015 for riparian protection in Puget Sound agricultural landscapes. We have directed approximately \$6 million to grants that protect and restore freshwater riparian zones in agricultural landscapes across Puget Sound. The Washington State Farm Bureau, the Washington Dairy Federation, the Western Washington Agricultural Association, the Kitsap and Snohomish Conservation Districts, NGOs, tribes, and others provided advice on this new conservation easement program.
- \$165,000 to the Snoqualmie Tribe to for Cherry Valley Dairy Collaboration (2012). The lower Snoqualmie Valley is home to both highly productive farmlands and prime habitat for salmon for spawning. Chinook salmon populations are less than ten percent of their historic levels and today there are only a few dairies left in the Valley. Cherry Valley Dairy in Duvall has been around for 80 years. All of the dairy's milk goes to make artisanal cheese sold at local venues. The Snoqualmie Tribe teamed up with Cherry Valley Dairy to make some major improvements to Rasmussen Creek near the farm. Funded by an EPA grant, they recently removed a series of rock dams to allow migration of Coho salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout upstream. <http://mtsgreenway.org/blog/farms-and-fish-in-the-snoqualmie-valley>.

## Other Examples (R10 but not Puget Sound): Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Loans and Matching Funds

- \$25,000,000+ in Low-Interest Loans for Direct Seed and No-Till Equipment WA (Current; year-to-date). The Spokane Conservation District CWSRF Loan Program has made 500 low-interest loans (average \$50,000 loan amount), reducing sediment loss by an average of 8 tons per acre per year. Since its inception in 1994, this use of CWSRF funds has enabled launch or maintenance of direct seeding operations on 500,000+ acres resulting in a conservative estimate of over 24.8 million tons of soils conserved, keeping over 12 million tons of soil out of the state's waters.
- \$32.6M for Farmers Irrigation District Water Conservation OR (Current; year-to-date). The Farmers Irrigation District (FID) in Hood River OR used \$36.2M CWSRF loans over the past 7 years to convert open, earthen irrigation ditches to a pressurized and piped system and to purchase equipment for production of clean, renewable energy through micro-hydroelectric generation. As a result, the District conserves 6 billion gallons of water annually (from the 1995 baseline). Two thousand supplemental water right acres have been abandoned (sold for permanent instream habitat; proceeds used to pay off loans used to fund project). In addition, two minimum flow agreements have been adopted; 7,800 trees have been planted in the riparian corridor; 85,000 board feet of large woody debris placed in Green Point Creek. 2,000 average homes could be powered annually through the energy produced by this irrigation district; energy produced is fed into local grid. There is a purchase agreement with the local PUD and the sale of this energy used to pay off loans taken to fund project. 2.3 million annual kilowatt hour production increase of renewable low impact hydropower, 1,451 Individual irrigation pumps eliminated, and 1.45 million Kilowatt hours conserved annually due to eliminated irrigation pumps. <https://youtu.be/kcvR9bx2D6E>